

Superintendent's Report

July 15, 2010

Volunteer Park Temporary Closure. On Monday, July 12, Seattle Police Department closed Volunteer Park for about two hours to investigate a suspicious suitcase. The suitcase had been discovered by two Park Rangers who had been called to the park to handle a situation with a homeless person camping there. Police destroyed the suitcase and took one person into custody.

Park Rangers at Alki Beach over the 4th of July Holiday. Park Rangers performed targeted enforcement at Alki Beach this weekend, focusing particularly on beach fires. The department has received several complaints so far this year about illegal fires at Alki Beach. Rangers contacted several groups for illegal fires, and issues related to drinking/public intoxication. Park Rangers will continue this targeted enforcement for at least the next two weekends, and will continue checking the situation out there for the rest of the summer.

Periodically we send the Park Rangers or security staff to a variety of hot spots for limited and targeted enforcement; this is an example of that. Although it would be nice to be able to send our Park Rangers to Alki, and many other places, on a regular basis, we are neither budgeted nor staffed at a sufficient level to do so. As a part of our evaluation of the Ranger Program Pilot, we are recommending that the current policy restricting regular patrols by Park Rangers to downtown parks be changed to allow them to operate more freely throughout the system.

There are a number of policy, budget and personnel issues that will come into play in making and possibly implementing that decision.

Sewage Spill at Pritchard Beach. Pritchard Beach Park was closed from Tuesday, June 29, through Friday, July 2, at noon due to a sewage leak into the park from nearby private residences. The sewage was running across the parking lot. Working with Seattle Public Utilities, the

homeowners fixed the leaking pipes. The pipes had been damaged by tree roots. We tested the water two times during the week, and both tests came back indicating that the water was safe for swimming. After cleaning up the parking lot and getting back the second set of tests, we reopened the park just in time for the holiday weekend.

Atlantic City Nursery Public Meeting. On Wednesday, June 30, 2010, more than one hundred twenty (120) community people assembled to listen and share views on Parks & Recreation's draft use plan for the Atlantic City Nursery site. Issues discussed included public access, wetland restoration, urban farming and increased community safety. The information presented along with community comments will be presented to the Parks Board August 12th.

Step to it Challenge. This is a Seattle Parks and Recreation event for staff designed to encourage more physical activity by way of a friendly competition. The challenge will run from July 15-August 15, with Kick-Off Walks all around the city on July 15th at noon. The event is sponsored by Seattle Parks & Recreation and PCC. Weekly Drawings will be held and Certificates and Grand Prizes awarded on the Big Day of Play on August 28th at Magnuson Park.

Hempfest. The Board may have seen press reports that the organizers of Hempfest canceled their plans for a 3rd day. The event will only take place on August 21 and 22. They had asked to expand the event and include Friday, however, the Special Events review committee (made up of representatives from Fire, SPD, Parks, SDOT, Health, etc) unanimously voted against a 3rd day due to the impacts on the parks, streets and neighborhood around Myrtle Edwards Park. There was also concern about the citywide financial impacts that a 3rd day would have. Hempfest had initially asked for an administrative review of the committee decision to deny a third day but after further discussion with the City they decided to forgo the 3rd day this year.

Junction Plaza Park Dedication. The neighborhood packed the new pocket park at an official ribbon cutting ceremony for Junction Plaza Park last Tues. evening on July 29, 2010. City Councilmember's Sally Bagshaw and Tom Rasmussen along with Eric Friedli, Karen Daubert from the Seattle Parks Foundation and community leaders thanked the neighborhood, the architect, and SDOT for all their great work and generosity. The .15-acre parcel, located at 4545 42nd Ave SW, at the NW corner of 42nd Avenue NW and SW Alaska Street is an excellent example of public / private partnership. Both the acquisition and the development were funded by the Pro Parks Levy Opportunity Fund and Neighborhood Matching Fund awards.

Wallingford/Hamilton. The new sunken garden that was designed and built as part of the Hamilton International Middle School renovation will be completed and opened this week. The community didn't feel like we should spend any money on an opening celebration, but you are welcome to help celebrate the completed school renovation on Thursday, September 2nd from 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony and an opportunity to explore the school and the garden. In addition, there is an all Community Celebration on Saturday, October 2nd from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. This will be an opportunity for the community to come tour the renovated historical school buildings as well as the new gym and Wallingford Park interface with the new community amphitheater.

New Park Names. Two new parks in the Ballard area have been named, and a playfield in West Seattle has a new name. They are:

Crown Hill Park - This park, at Holman Road Northwest and 13th Avenue Northwest, will include new ballfields, open space and seating areas. Construction will begin next spring and should be completed in the fall of 2011.

Kirke Park – Located at 7028 Ninth Ave. N.W. in Ballard, plans for the park include a community garden, a sitting wall, a lawn, a sledding hill and a small play area, as well as a planted buffer

along the back edge with a trail. Construction on the site is scheduled to begin this fall, with completion expected in 2011. "Kirke" (keer'kuh) means church in Norwegian. This name pays tribute to both the Norwegian heritage of the neighborhood and the history of the site. The location was home to the Church of Seventh Elect Church in Israel for more than 90 years.

Walt Hundley Playfield - Seattle Parks and Recreation acquired the playfield at High Point, located at 6920 34th Ave. S.W., from the Seattle Housing Authority in 1977. The 11-acre playfield, developed in 1980, consists of two baseball fields and a lighted soccer field.

The new name will honor Walter R. Hundley, the first African-American superintendent for Seattle Parks and Recreation — a position he held from 1977 to 1988. Hundley was instrumental in acquiring the High Point site for the community center and playfield. He also was the former administrator of the Central Area Motivation Project. He died in 2002.

RFQ on Central Waterfront Project. The RFQ went out Wednesday of last week. It is a two stage RFQ for an urban design group and a project management engineering group. Once the selection is done they will form one team. The project will include the urban design, streets and utilities and general redevelopment of the Central Waterfront once the viaduct comes down. They will also be responsible for coordinating with the Seawall design team. Submittals are due in early August and we will know more then.

America's Great Outdoors Listening Session. On July 1st the Director of the National Park Service was in Seattle for what was a called a listening session. This was one of 15 or so public meeting around the country where citizens are invited to participate in small group discussion sessions about how President Obama and the federal government can make the outdoors more accessible. A report is due to the President by November. Seattle was unique in that a listening

session for youth was held in the afternoon. Our Teen Development Leaders were asked to coordinate and facilitate the youth session. It will be interesting to see the results of the discussion.

Meeting regarding creation of a clothing optional beach. The Superintendent recently met with a group of people who are advocating for a clothing optional beach in Seattle. We encouraged the group to work on getting the necessary political and community support.

Responding to set of Mayor Priorities. We are re-working our priorities according to the Mayor's established priorities, including Walk. Bike. Ride., Engage Seattle, Youth and Families Initiative, Sustainable Communities, and the Seattle Jobs Plan.

Aquarium Transition. At 8 am on July 1st I (Christopher) had the honor of turning over a ceremonial key to the Aquarium to the Seattle Aquarium Society. The non-profit group is now responsible for the operation of the Aquarium. It was a momentous occasion and many of the people who worked for years on the transition process were dutifully recognized.

McGraw Square. SDOT is moving forward with their design for the McGraw Square plaza which would connect the triangle containing the McGraw Statue with the Streetcar platform and include closing Westlake between Stewart and Olive Street to traffic. The design includes hardscape and landscaping and will give the statue a larger prominence. The design has been reviewed by the Landmarks Board Architectural Review Committee (ARC) and the ARC is supportive of the current design. SDOT is working on 100% construction documents for presentation to the full Landmarks Board for review and approval. Parks and SDOT are also working on a MOA whereby SDOT would take all responsibility for maintenance of the plaza.